

O 030652Z NOV 08  
FM USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8629  
INFO VIENNA IAEA POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T UNVIE VIENNA 000583

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/31/2018  
TAGS: [KNNP](#) [IAEA](#) [AORC](#) [IR](#) [SY](#) [KN](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PRESSES ELBARADEI ON EARLY REPORT ON  
SYRIA

Classified By: Ambassador Gregory L. Schulte, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

¶1. (S) In an October 31 meeting with IAEA Director General Mohammed ElBaradei, Ambassador Schulte reiterated the U.S. request for a written report to the IAEA Board of Governors, under a Syria-specific verification agenda item, detailing the Agency's ongoing investigation into Syrian clandestine nuclear activities. ElBaradei would not commit to a written report or an agenda item, saying it depended on the substance of a report. He pressed the USG to provide more information, including imagery. On Iran, ElBaradei confirmed the Agency will report again to the Board, noting the continuing lack of Iranian cooperation, but stated that the report will contain nothing new.

¶2. (S) On DPRK, ElBaradei expressed his appreciation for U.S. efforts to maintain a significant IAEA role in verification activities despite considerable DPRK reluctance, but complained the Agency cannot "play second fiddle" to the six parties in a pure consultancy role. He appreciated the recent phone call from A/S Hill, and the Ambassador told him that A A/S McNerney would be coming to Vienna to discuss the IAEA's role in more detail. The Ambassador also emphasized our goal for the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and discussed, based on his recent visit, how to encourage Brazil and Argentina to adopt the Additional Protocol. END SUMMARY.

-----  
SYRIA  
-----

¶3. (S) Ambassador opened the meeting by saying that the case of Syria was different than the case of Iran, and we want to avoid driving Syria to adopt Iran's noncompliance policies. This means that the IAEA must pursue its investigation and make clear to Syria that it cannot avoid Board scrutiny by continued delay. We want Syria to choose the path of Libya, not Iran.

¶4. (S) Unfortunately, however, Syria seems to be adopting the techniques of Iran, whether in the Board room or on the ground with inspectors in order to prolong the investigation and avoid the potential consequences of its actions. Ambassador noted that Syria has followed Iran's lead in challenging the mandate, authority, and integrity of the Agency, and predicted that Syria --if it continues to adopt Iranian techniques-- will likely agree at the last minute to further (but limited) cooperation with the IAEA's investigation in order to avoid a tough report. Ambassador strongly urged the Director General to continue with the Agency's investigation into clandestine Syrian activities, and to provide a written report to the Board of Governors for discussion under a Syria-specific agenda item at the Board's November meeting.

¶5. (S) ElBaradei responded that the Agency is "doing what we're supposed to do" regarding Syria, but once again conveyed his serious displeasure that the IAEA was not alerted to Syria's alleged activities earlier, and his severe disapproval that force was relied on instead of the Agency's

verification process. ElBaradei conveyed that the Agency is now in the process of blindly "picking up the pieces" after the fact, and is still waiting for the lab results of the environmental samples it obtained from Al Kibar. ElBaradei stated the IAEA does not yet have a clear picture of the nature of activity at Al Kibar and is not in a position to make any determinations. The DG noted the further complications arising from the assassination of the Agency's main Syrian interlocutor, and complained that the IAEA lacks the authority to request more information and access from Syria. Noting that "I can only work with the tools I have," ElBaradei reiterated the Safeguard Department's request for imagery of the Al Kibar site after the bombing.

¶16. (S) Ambassador noted our understanding that while no commercial imagery of the site after the bombing was available, the U.S. has provided a significant amount of information to the Agency regarding activities at the facility, including imagery of the exposed reactor vessel, as well as information on the clean-up and remediation efforts pursued by Syria following the bombing. Given the information available to the Agency, Ambassador argued that the onus should be on Syria to explain the nature of the facility, to which ElBaradei responded that to the contrary the obligation is on the "accusers" to make the case, and that Syria is not "guilty until proven innocent." ElBaradei again complained about a lack of information including satellite imagery, to which Ambassador responded that when information is provided it must be acted upon appropriately, noting that in the past information on Syrian sites passed to the Agency was provided back to Syria, allowing Syria to remediate those facilities while still denying access.

¶17. (S) Returning to the matter of the Board, ElBaradei stated that only once he had substance would he provide a report to the Board. Ambassador argued that we considered this to be a very substantive verification issue, as did the EU and other countries that had requested a report to the November Board. Our goal was to work with the IAEA Secretariat in conducting this investigation in a professional manner. However, if the DG did not respect Member State requests for a report and agenda item, we could have on of two situations: either Governors could put in writing their requests for a report and agenda item, or there could be a repeat of the debate of the last Board meeting on the agenda. Either would politicize the discussion, when our common goal was a thorough IAEA investigation.

-----  
IRAN  
-----

¶18. (S) ElBaradei said that he would have little new to report to the Board on Iran. He said that he did not expect any movement from Iran at least until next June, after the presidential elections in Iran.

-----  
DPRK  
-----

¶19. (S) On DPRK, ElBaradei expressed his appreciation for his recent telephone conversation with A/S Hill and acknowledged the DPRK's resistance to an IAEA verification role. He noted the recent negative statements about the IAEA by the DPRK at UNGA. He cautioned that it would not be good for the nonproliferation regime if the Agency served only as a consultant to the Six-Party process, noting that the IAEA can only work under the authority of the Board of Governors, not at the discretion of certain Member States. He suggested that the Six-Parties report to the Secretariat so that it in turn could report to the Board.

¶10. (S) Ambassador said that we appreciated his advice and that of his team on the IAEA's role. As suggested by his staff, perhaps the Six-Parties could agree to a monitoring role that would allow the Agency to be prepared to take the DPRK back under IAEA safeguards. Ambassador informed

ElBaradei that Acting A/S McNerney is coming to Vienna on November 10 to discuss the IAEA role in detail with Mr. Heinonen. DG ElBaradei expressed appreciation and said that we seemed to be on the same track.

-----  
Additional Protocol  
-----

¶11. (S) The Ambassador briefed ElBaradei on our goal for the upcoming meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. ElBaradei said that our shift from an outright ban to a criteria based approach for restricting sensitive technology transfer should help in our quest for multilateral assurances of fuel supply. Ambassador described our effort to secure the support of Argentina and Brazil for the Additional Protocol as a criterion for sensitive technology transfer in the short term and, in the long term, the adoption of the AP. Based on his recent trip to Argentina and Brazil, the Ambassador told ElBaradei that Argentina was politically ready to conclude the AP, but was not yet prepared to take on the technical reporting requirements, while in Brazil the opposite was the case. ElBaradei noted that the technical requirements should not be a real hindrance for Argentina, and that he has repeatedly heard from both countries in the past several years that they are "very close" to concluding an AP. ElBaradei noted that he has tried to reassure Brazil that the IAEA will not "snoop" into activities conducted before the conclusion of an AP, stating that "we all know they were pursuing nukes." ElBaradei undertook to press Brazil to adopt the AP, suggesting he would do so through Sergio Duarte but also asking our advice on which government officials to press.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

¶12. (S) ElBaradei did not commit to a written report or agenda item for the November Board meeting, though this may have reflected his unwillingness to be seen as succumbing to pressure from the U.S. and EU. We hope, however, that he will understand our argument that his putting it on the agenda will be less politically charged than Member States forcing it on.

¶13. (S) ElBaradei was much more relaxed on the DPRK. We thank A/S Hill for his phone call and Acting A/S McNerney for scheduling a visit here next month.  
SCHULTE

NNNN

End Cable Text